Another December storm and the chance of a White Christmas

20 December 2013 - Met Office forecasters are expecting the current unsettled weather to continue in the run up to Christmas, with spells of heavy rain and strong winds affecting the UK at times.

Much of this weekend will be cool and showery before an area of low pressure develops over the Atlantic on Sunday, deepening rapidly to pass just to the northwest of the UK on Monday and into Tuesday. This is bringing very strong winds and heavy rain to much of the UK from Monday morning through to late Tuesday morning and Met Office National Severe Weather Warningshave been issued for wind and rain across the southwest and northern areas of the UK over the next few days.

The public should be aware of the potential for significant disruption to travel due to the very strong winds and also the risk of some flooding issues due to the heavy rain.

During this period of unsettled weather, people are advised to stay up to date with the latest Met Office forecasts and National Severe Weather Warnings and find out what to do in severe weatherso they can plan ahead for the weather in store and make the most of the festive season.

Chief Forecaster Eddy Carroll said: "We can expect stormy weather in many areas to start the Christmas week, but looking forward to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we are expecting it to turn colder, with a mix of wintry showers and sunny spells but for wind speeds to drop. So there is a chance that some places may see a White Christmas".

Throughout this unsettled spell Met Office forecasters and advisors are working round the clock with our partners to keep everyone up to date with the latest forecast information so they can plan and prepare for the expected weather.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said: "People who are set to be away from home for the festive period are urged to check the flood situation and take precautionary steps to prepare, for example by moving valuable items to safety, before travelling. People are also urged to check the flood risk situation for their journey and at their destination.

"People are also being urged not to drive through dangerous floodwater. The Environment Agency has teams on the ground checking flood defences and monitoring river levels and will have teams ready to respond throughout the Christmas period."

John McTaggart Head of On-Road Services at the Highways Agency said: "We are working closely with the Met Office to monitor conditions ahead of the weather being forecast for next week.

"Road users are urged to check traffic and weather conditions before setting out on journeys and to heed any advice such as speed restrictions once they are on motorways and major trunk roads.

"Be aware of sudden gusts of wind, and give high-sided vehicles, caravans, motorbikes and bicycles plenty of space. In the event of persistent high winds we may need to close certain bridges to traffic for a period, so please be alert for warnings of closures and follow signposted diversion routes."

Don't forget you can "Tell a Forecaster" the impacts the weather is having in your area, uploading photos and information via your mobile phone.

In this video Met Office Chief Forecaster, Eddy Carroll, explains how we expect the weather to develop over the next few days, the potential for a stormy day on Monday and whether we'll see a White Christmas.

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